

Problems beset an inspection of the m.v. Communicator by a prospective buyer. Firstly to avoid the possibility of sickness by the then owner a large tender, almost the size of the communicator herself was used. However the crew of the communicator had previously been instructed not to let the tender operator on board. The owner finally came up from below deck and informed the communicator that they could be let on board.

WFRL presenter Lisa was recently on holiday in the Canary Islands, whilst on the beach she heard a group of people playing a tape of the previous WFRL transmission featuring herself, and Andy Walker closing the station - small world isn't it !

An American research company have recently completed an audience survey for radio Caroline. This puts listenership in the United Kingdom at 4½ million, with a further 3 million on the continent. We can be assured at the accuracy of these figures as Ronan apparently complained about how much the survey cost him.

A long while since John Dwyer was mentioned in these columns. Since leaving Caroline John has spent a spell in the Irish republic, and has since been working Freelance for ILR station in Liverpool Radio City, where he has presented the latenight/ Early Morning programme on Sundays.

Ever wondered how Caroline manages to get hold of its foreign presenters ? John Ford who was with the station in 1985/86 first applied to join Laser 558, but heard nothing from them. John then travelled to Europe where he heard Caroline on air and decided that Caroline was the station he wanted to work for. So he contacted Alec Newman, who himself had worked for Caroline earlier in the year. Alec was working in the States, where he is today on a rock station. Alec made arrangements for John to go out to the Ross Revenge, just before he was due to travel out to the ship he got a wire from his mother saying that Laser had now contacted him asking John to join them, however his mind was already made up and John Ford was heard on Caroline.

Remember Scott Shannon's Rocking America from Laser 558 - The programme can now be heard on the Chiltern Radio Network every Saturday night.

Problems arose for Keith of Merseyside's KDA Radio, as when the DTI returned some confiscated equipment to him, he found that he had been given the wrong items! On contacting the DTI, they apologised but told him he would have to wait a few weeks as they were very busy! (RECO)

Many thanks as usual to all our contributors; All contributions for Wavelength 17 by August 5th.
See you at Driftback 20.



*Ride the First Wave
to New Music on the*

ROCK & ROLL ALTERNATIVE

*with George Gimarc every
SUNDAY - 9PM-1AM C.S.T.*

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fight for free radio



JUNE·JULY 1987

No.16

RADIO UNICORN



FALCON RADIO



YOUR COMPREHENSIVE SHORT WAVE GUIDE

Starts Page 5

Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5AU.

M.V. COMMUNICATOR

The problem of a radio ship not broadcasting is that people still want to know what is taking place, the result is highly inaccurate rumours, which start off as a simple story, then develop out of all recognition. Such is the case with the latest developments on the m.v. Communicator, ill founded reports have talked of mutiny, hijacking and illness amongst the crew. Wavelength has researched the subject carefully, and sources close to the Communicator tell us that everything is set fair.

The latest chapter opened in mid May when the ship was towed to a new anchorage 18 miles North East of Dunkirk, France and only a quarter of a mile from the Sally Viking shipping line out of Ramsgate. Towing the ship was the regular Lutch tender operator, and contrary to other reports there had been no snatching of the Communicator by any creditors. The operator had been given a shareholding in the vessel to cover unpaid debts, and following a heated conversation with a person acting for the station he towed the ship.

Work is commencing to provide ballast to make the ship firmer, whilst a new aerial system is also being constructed. The design is not unlike one used on the Mi Amigo, however it is bigger, and slightly wider. Two well known offshore names are thought to be involved in the construction. The same captain remains on board, and the regular Dutch tender has also remained unchanged.

Once the station is back on air there will be two outlets, with two very similar formats although one will be slightly more uptempo, the other laid back, and there are plans to make one a 'Yuppy' station featuring regular financial reports, one major change is that the actual 'Laser' name may be dropped, in an attempt to leave the station's past and relations with the authorities behind.

The new organisation is for the most part American, and the objective is to obtain international advertisers in favour of those previously obtained from the United Kingdom.

Debts accrued by the previous organisation are in the process of being paid, a proportion of the money having been put into a high interest account where it remains untouched, whilst the paperwork apparently not well handled by the previous owner, is finalised. However former employees still with the station have been paid up to date, as has Brandy Lee who has returned to South Lakota. Andrew Turner now working with London News station LBC again was paid on an advertising commission basis and is still owed £9,000. In total £20,000 is still owed in salaries although all debts will be met.

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Front Illustration;
CSIs from Radio Unicorn and
Falcon Radio.

FRS-SALES PRODUCTIONS

After a massive re-organisation we proudly announce the relaunch of our sales-services. Brandnew lists containing a wide variety of (new) recordings and a full range of video-tapes! Convince yourself and order today. Send 1 IRC or a 75ct/80pf stamp and you'll receive our full lists! FRSH, P.O.Box 41, 7700 AA in Dedemsvaart, The Netherlands. ONLY ONE CAN BE THE CHEAPEST...

Welcome

One of your most popular features in our current series 'Four Go Mad in Ireland', which reaches its penultimate part this issue. As we go to press I shall be joining Steve West on a further visit to the Emerald Isle, we shall of course report back to you in future issues.

In August we hope to meet many of you once again at Driftback 20, a report on which will appear in Wavelength 17. These occasions are always popular as an opportunity to put a face to a name or voice.

Adrian Cooke

Adrian Cooke, Editor.

M.V. ROSS REVENGE

—Staff shortages, and a change of location—

Following the daylong absence of Caroline 558 on April 22/23 Tony Peters returned to the Ross Revenge after almost six months away from the station, no doubt also bringing the required spare part. Tony replaced Mark Matthews in the schedules, and presented his first programme on April 24th. John Tyler made his return on April 26th, and with the album orientated 'Over-drive' service still off the air it was on 558 that he was heard, being given the late evening programme, and on April 27th with Steve Conway back on news the schedule read as follows;

- 0500 Kevin Turner
- 0900 Tony Peters
- 1300 Mick Williams
- 1700 Dave James
- 2100 John Tyler
- 0100 David Foster

May 4th was a Bank Holiday in the United Kingdom—Mayday "We have to be careful how we say that out here else we get stick from the Coastguard" said Kevin Turner on his morning programme. Over the holiday weekend there were some problems with the weather, and Mick Williams for one was feeling slightly the worse. On May 5th John Tyler livened up one of his record links when he accidentally set fire to his pullover!

Some staff shortages caused problems from May 10th, both Mick Williams and Dave James left the ship, but as no replacements had come aboard and the 24 hour schedule continued Tony Peters and John Tyler presented two shows a day, a total of eight hours each this lasted for eight days by which time both were sounding rather depressed. John claimed that he woke up in the night saying 'Caroline 558'. From May 19th the pressure was eased by bringing David Foster forward to 2100. John and Tony shared the 1700 programme, and the station returned to 21 hour operation.

Further staff changes on May 24th was able to ameliorate the situation Kevin Turner was replaced by programme controller Peter Phillips, who now took control of the Breakfast Show, in addition new members Andy Robin, and Jackie Lee also joined the station, this gave us a new look to the schedule from May 25th;

- 0500 Peter Phillips
- 0900 Andy Robin
- 1300 Tony Peters
- 1700 John Tyler
- 2100 Jackie Lee

Newsreader:
Steve Conway

A selection of new Lotto 649 advertisements were aired on May 26th, along with a promotion for a forthcoming Caroline Rock Show. At the weekend Steve Conway took the station back into 24 hour operation once more.

On May 31st the Viewpoint programmes on 96.3kHz continued until 2300, enabling further religious broadcasts to take advantage of Caroline's available airtime, a service which is only repeated on Trans World Radio in Monte Carlo. An increase in the Viewpoint hours has been expected for some time, and promotions have been voiced by Peter Phillips and Jackie Lee for airplay on the 558 service.

Monday is still the official night for maintenance, usually involving an hour long oil change for the generators. On June 1st this took place at 0000. The next day there was a change in the schedules with Jackie and Andy swapping their respective shows, in addition a new advertisement was aired for the Belgian music festival, Rock Tourhant.

A Closedown was made at breakfast time on June 10th, following an earlier than usual news bulletin at five to eight both Caroline and the Dutch service on 96.3kHz Radio Monique closed at 0800. It was anticipated that the stations would be back on the air in 6 hours, but it was not until just before six in the evening that the station had made a return. During the silence the Ross Revenge had lifted her anchor and sailed to a new location, just ahead of the Government's new territorial sea Act, which had been implemented with the bare minimum of publicity. The ship was now further away from the mainland, and more towards the Kent Coast. The exact position as announced on air.

Latitude 51 degrees, 27 minutes, 23 seconds North
Longitude 1 degree, 48 minutes, 49 seconds East
Sea Area South Falls Head.

The move has brought the Ross Revenge nearer the shipping lanes and regular mentions for the vessels passing have already begun to appear. Jackie Lee hosted from 1800 on this evening.

New staff had now joined the station and were heard on air for the first time on June 11th Paul Graham, Jeff Morris and Dave Wilson, although Dave's role on board is unclear, Steve Conway continues his through the night shows from Friday through Sunday, the new schedule from Monday read.

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 0500 Peter Phillips | Newsreader |
| 0900 Jackie Lee | Steve Conway |
| 1300 Andy Robin | |
| 1700 Paul Graham | |
| 2100 Jeff Morris | |
| 0100 Dave Wilson | |

This schedule varied at weekends.

On election night Jackie Lee and Steve Conway presented additional news bulletins and election reports on the hour at 1900, 2300 and through the night until 0900 the following morning. It wasn't exactly Robin Day, but that didn't seem to matter. On 96.3 interesting developments with continuous AOR/Rock music, punctuated with the occasional Radio Caroline jingle, this has continued on most nights since, and has brought with it much speculation about a return of 'Overdrive'. We understand that it is hoped that some sort of music service will be started on 96.3 after Monique, and Viewpoint, a final decision being made when Tom Anderson returns from his rather protracted holiday.

PEOPLE

Plenty of new staff once again, but tracking down their Radio past is getting increasingly difficult. Andy Robin has worked for the Voice of Peace, write Anoraks UK in their weekly report. Andy has a slight Irish tinge in his voice. Jackie Lee is Australian, and follows a line of presenters from that part of the world, the most recent being Jamie King. Paul Graham has worked on stations both in Leicester and in Ireland, and has written for the Free Radio Round-Up. As for Jeff Morris and Dave Wilson, we await your letters.

TECHNICAL POINTS

The long awaited increase in power of 558 looks like taking place shortly. The necessary diplexer is now on board the ship, paid for by the organisers of Lotto 649 in return for the promotion of their prize draw. The work itself will bring the power up to 10kw.

MUSIC

Caroline 558 continues the hit music format. What is most interesting however is not the choice of Top 40 records, but the oldies chosen to be played in between. It is common for an artist with a record in the charts to have some of his previous hits included in the playlist. The station also seems to go through phases of favourite artists. In late May it was the Beatles, no doubt inspired by the re-release of the classic Sgt. Pepper LP, at one stage a Beatles record was played every day after the 8.00 news. By mid June the favourite was Diana Ross.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| FM | 88 | 92 | 96 | 100 | 104 | 108 | MHz | | |
| SW | 60 | 65 | 80 | 100 | 130 | 180 | MHz | | |
| MW | 54 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 100 | 120 | 140 | 160 | kHz |
| LW | 150 | 170 | 190 | 220 | 250 | 270 | 285 | kHz | |

LOGGINGS TABLE

Short Wave stations logged, April/May 1987.

- 6200 WESTSIDE RADIO 17/5 (1)
- RADIO VALLERI 31/5 (1)
- WEEKEND MUSIC RADIO 31/5 (2)
- RADIO DUCK: Oldies 31/5 (3)
- 6206.4 RADIO DELMARE: Raided May 17th-5/4, 12/4, 26/4, 3/5, 10/5 (4)
- Radio Pogo 5/4, 18/4, 3/5 (5)
- Radio Scorpio 5/4, 3/5 (6)
- Radio Limit 12/4, 25/4 (5)
- Radio Privat 12/4, 26/4, 9/5 (5)
- Four Freedoms World Service: Rock'n Roll and Editorial-18/4 (7)
- FRS Holland: English, German and Dutch-19/4, 20/4, 17/5 (8)
- Radio Marabu 25/4, 2/5, 10/5 (5+6)
- Radio California 25/4, 2/5, 9/5 (5)
- Clandestine Listeners Club Germany-CLOC 26/4 (9)
- Right Wing Radio 26/4 (5)
- 6206.6 RADIO APOLLO (10)
- 6210 RIVERSIDE RADIO 30/5 (11)
- BRI 31/5 (6+12)
- 6217 RIVERSIDE RADIO 12/4, 17/5, 24/5 (11)
- Maple Leaf Radio 3/5, 17/5 (?)
- ABC Radio (13)
- 6218 PREMIER RADIO 12/4 (14)
- BRITAIN RADIO INTERNATIONAL-BRI 3/5 (6+12)
- 6220 RADIO 48 19/4 (6)
- RADIO RIDICULOUS 26/4 (15)
- 6221 RELAY STATION.
- Satellite Broadcasting Company 31/5 (5)
- Radio Hexagon 31/5 (16)
- Rainbow Radio Germany 31/5 (17)
- 6222 RAINBOW RADIO GERMANY 26/4 (17)

- 6224 RADIO PAMELA- 5/4,19/4,26/4,10/5 (15)
Radio Unicorn: Free Radio Promotions 26/4,16/5 (18)
- 6230 SUDWEST RADIO 5/4 (19)
RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL-RECC 5/4,3/5 (10)
BRI 19/4 (6+12)
RIVERSIDE RADIO 10/5 (11)
Maple Leaf Radio 10/5 (?)
- 6232 RELAY STATION.
Four Freedoms World Service-4FWS 12/4 (7)
WESTSIDE RADIO 17/5 (1)
- 6233 RADIO ORION 11/4 (20)
Four Freedoms World Service 11/4 (7)
BRI 12/4,27/5(6+12)
- 6235 SUDWEST RADIO 5/4,3/5 (19)
- 6240 RADIO RAINBOW 5/4,12/4,26/4,17/5,31/5
Sunrise Radio 12/4 (4)
HTE Radio 2 10/5,31/5
Radio Hexagon 10/5 (16)
RIVERSIDE RADIO 11/4,25/4 (11)
Maple Leaf Radio 25/4 (?)
SPECTRUM LEISURE COMMUNICATIONS 20/4
RADIO SOVEREIGN: Oldies, Test Transmissions from Eire 17/5,24/5 (23)
RADIO DUCK 30/5 (3)
- 6260 RADIO DUCK 26/4,10/5 (3)
RELAY STATION
Four Freedoms World Service (7)
- 6266/7 RADIO ORION 5/4,12/4,19/4,26/4,3/5,10/5,31/5 (20)
Four Freedoms World Service 12/4 (7)
- 6268 SPECTRUM WORLD BROADCASTING 5/4 (22)
RADIO ORION 17/5,24/5 (20)
- 6273 SCOTTISH FREE RADIO NETWORK: WLR (12)
- 6270 RADIO DUCK 19/4,16/5,17/5(3)
RADIO DISCOLINE 26/4 (24)
- 6275 RADIO WAVES INTERNATIONAL 12/4,19/4,25/4,24/5,31/5(25)
ATLANTA RADIO 24/5 (10)
- 6280 RELAY STATION:
Radio Joystick International 5/4(5)
WESTSIDE RADIO: Rock and Free Radio News 5/4,12/4,19/4,26/4,3/5,10/5,17/5,31/5 (1)
Centre Radio 12/4
Four Freedoms World Service 26/4,31/5 (7)
Satellite Broadcasting Company 17/5 (5)
Radio Jeopardy 17/5 (?)
Rainbow Radio Germany 24/5 (17)
PFBS-PIRATE FREAKS BROADCASTING SERVICE 12/4,26/4 (8+12)
- 6285 RADIO APOLLO 5/4,19/4,3/5,10/5,31/5 (10)
- 6290 RADIO ORION 18/4,20/4,2/5,4/5,16/5,17/5,23/5,25/5,30/5 (20)
RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL 19/4 (10)
ATLANTA RADIO 24/5 (10)
- 6293/4 PFBS 17/4,26/4,10/5 (8+12)
- 6295/7 RADIO NOVA(Belguim) 12/4,19/4,3/5,17/5,31/5 (26)
- 6300 RELAY STATION
Four Freedoms World Service 5/4 (7)
WFRL-WONDERFUL FREE RADIO LONDON 12/4,19/4,17/5 (10)
STARBOARD SOUND 20/4 (12)
SPECTRUM LEISURE COMMUNICATIONS 4/5,10/5,31/5 (22)
- 6310 RADIO IRELAND INTERNATIONAL: Relays Only
Energy 103 19/4
NDCR-North Dublin Community Radio 3/5,10/5,17/5,31/5 (28)
RADIO BRIGITTE 24/5, (29)
- 6312 RADIO GALACTICA 19/4 (30)
RADIO APOLLO 20/4 (10)

- 6313 RELAY STATION
Radio Huitsilapochtli 5/4,26/4 (5)
- 6317 SOUTH EAST RADIO 31/5 (?)
- 6318 SPECTRUM LEISURE COMMUNICATIONS 12/4,17/5 (22)
- 6329 RADIO EUROPE INTERNATIONAL 20/4,17/5 (1)
- 6850 RADIO SKYWAVE 12/4,3/5,10/5 (31)
Falcon Radio 10/5,17/5 (31)
Radio Sounds 17/5 (5)
- 7361 RADIO AQUARIUS INTERNATIONAL 3/5 (32)
RADIO 101 10/5,17/5,31/5 (33)
Radio Jessica 12/4 (8)
- 7372 RADIO CALADONIA 17/5 (32)
- 7383 DUTCH RELAY SERVICE 3/5 (34).

ADDRESS BOOK

1. 310 Collins Avenue West, Dublin, Ireland.
2. 42 Arran Close, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, England.
3. R.D. c/o 83B Church Street, Stoke Newington, London N16, England.
4. Postbus 36, B-2050, Antwerp, Belgium.
5. Postfach 220342, 5600 Wuppertal 22, West Germany.
6. Postbus 19074, 3501 DB Utrecht, The Netherlands.
7. Box 255, Venus, Texas 76084, USA.
8. Postbus 41, 7700 AA Dedemsvaart, The Netherlands.
9. Postfach 540101, 4100 Duisburg 11, West Germany.
10. Po Box 5, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5AU, England.
11. Po Box 39, Waterford, Ireland.
12. 32 Victoria Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3NQ, England.
13. 4 Arundel Square, Waterford, Ireland.
14. 139 Ballyfermot Road, Dublin 10, Ireland.
15. Postbus 1019, 2200 BA, Noordwijk, The Netherlands.
16. Postfach 1225, D-4354, Datteln, West Germany.
17. Postbus 38, 6744, ZG Edeveen, The Netherlands.
18. 3 Rosewarne Cottages, Rosewarne Downs, Camborne, Cornwall, TR14 0BE, England.
19. Postfach 1471, 6690 St.Wendel, West Germany.
20. 82b Edgewood Road, Rednall, Birmingham, England, B45 8SG.
21. 151 Moneymore, Drogheda, County Louth, Ireland.
22. EM Broadcasting, London, WC1N 3XX, England.
23. Po Box 45, Kettering, Northants, NN16 0NW, England.
24. Postfach 1130, D-4154, Tönisvorst 1, West Germany.
25. BP 130, 92504, Rueil Malmaison, Cedex, France.
26. Postbus 5, 2638 Reet, Belgium.
27. 514 Brighton Road, Croydon, Surrey, England.
28. Walden House, Oscar Traynor Road, Coolock, Dublin 5, Ireland.
29. c/o Bridgitte Van Gelder, Postbus 10, Rouveen, 795470, The Netherlands.

- 30. Postbus 60, 2510, Mortsel, Belgium.
- 31. Po Box 1686, Dublin, Ireland.
- 32. Postbus 65027, 3002 DA, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
- 33. BP 2, 4680 Gemmenich, Belgium.
- 34. Postbus 81, 3450 AB Vieuaten, The Netherlands.
- 35. Po Box 3H9, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 1AQ, England.

The address for Maple Leaf Radio is Po Box 1133 Valley View, Alberta
Toronto, Canada TCH 3U2.

GREAT BRITAIN

RADIO APOLLO (10) continue to remain active, and has announced its broadcast dates for the remainder of the year; they are July 5th, August 9th, September 6th, October 11th, November 8th and December 13th.

FMTR- FREE MEDWAY TOWN RADIO had their court case on May 1st, and received what is thought to be the largest fine for a Shortwave operator to date, in all £600 plus an additional £20 in court costs. However in addition to this all equipment, valued at £1000, was also confiscated, although this will no doubt be affected by the recent House of Lords ruling. Station Manager Steve Harper told Wavelength that he planned to appeal against the decision, and was still hoping to get the equipment returned. FMTR are planning a return to the air as soon as possible. (35)

RADIO PAMELA(15) plan to limit short wave broadcasts to one a month, with a power of 50 watts, whilst the station concentrates on Medium wave programmes once more, in addition relays will be carried for Radio Unicorn, Satellite Broadcasting Company and Radio Torenvalk. Radio Unicorn(18) are making their relays every third Sunday and will be promoting Free Radio organisations, Publications and Merchandise during their broadcasts. They wish to hear from anybody who is interested in some publicity.

RADIO ORION (20) continue on Saturdays and Sundays, their regular channel being 6266/7, although others have been tested. In addition some relays are carried, most notably for the Four Freedoms World Service 4FWS (7) with John England, who has recorded some station IDs for Orion. During his broadcast on June 7th much time was given to the forthcoming British General Election, and Mr. England advised us to think of our freedoms before making our vote. In the United States 4FWS is apparently suing for one trillion dollars, although before John England could explain any further he was interrupted by Red Cross Radio. Reception reports are verified with a CSL Card, Fan British Censorship sticker and calender.

RADIO EAST COAST COMMERCIAL-RECC (10) can be heard on the 1st Sunday of the month featuring their well prepared 1x programme, and in addition at 1230 local time the Short Cuts competition in which the listener has to identify various pieces of music from short excerpts, the prize is a cassette tape of the Top 10 Uk singles. The broadcast on June 7th continued until 2.00 in the afternoon.

IRELAND

RADIO IRELAND, despite not transmitting any of their own programmes have been relaying North Dublin Community Radio, notably the Early Call show with Dave O'Connor and Tony Faulkner from 0830 to 1100. (28)

RADIO RAINBOW (21) have been responsible for a growing number of relays, which has left Kierren Murray's Free Radio Programme as the sole survivor, this is transmitted from 1200 to 1300. On June 14th the station relayed



6.300KHz 48M.

Every 2nd Sunday in the Month —:

**With the BEST Free Radio News
and the FINEST MUSIC
in Europe**

*More: Classic Album Tracks & Rock Music
More: Free Radio News plus
a German Service Every 3rd Month*



P.O. BOX 5. HUNSTANTON. NORFOLK. PE36 5AU

the Scottish station WLR. This programme, hosted by John Dean included a review of magazines available, and the many Phone line services now provided.

RIVERSIDE RADIO (11) will shortly be testing 7573 in the 41 metre band. Future programmes include three more relays for Maple Leaf Radio, Country and Western from Chuck Wilson of Eire's KLB, and two shows from Britain Radio's Roger Davis.

RADIO SOVEREIGN(23) the former Twickenham based Oldies station has begun test transmissions from the Irish Republic, these are carried on Shortwave at 6240 kHz, 97.8FM and 1521 Khz. The plan is to transmit daily from 6am to 6pm into Ireland, Scotland North Wales and the North West of England, tests are mainly heard on Sundays, but have also been on air during the week. No fixed date for regular programmes has yet been given.

RADIO SKYWAVE (31) have been less active on the short wave whilst the operators turn their attention to a new FM station in the Dublin area - Downtown Radio on 86.7

WESTSIDE RADIO continue their regular weekly schedule, every Sunday on 6280, although during May tests were made on other 48 metre band channels notably 6200 and 6232, on May 24th the station suffered from a mixer failure at 1030, although this was hastily repaired, no solder was used! Westside has also jumped on the relay Wagon, on June 7th, it was BEMS and future relays will be made for a station by the name of Radio Humbug.

EUROPE

RADIO DELMARE (4) was raided by the Belgian RTT during their broadcast on May 17th, the raid took place at 1030, the transmitter finally leaving the air at 1045, during a relay of FRS Holland, only the transmitter was taken, however this is still a major setback for Delmare and the many stations who rely on their facilities to transmit their programmes. A previous raid on the station took place on the medium wave service back in March 1984, now in addition to any fine there is the possibility of a prison sentence for the station manager Johann Rood.

In the meantime FRS Holland are in desperate need of a new relay station to continue their 3rd Sunday transmissions(8) (Radio Telex).

New to the band is the DUTCH RELAY SERVICE (34) hopes to test the following frequencies during the Summer months, they are 6284, 6930, 7383, 11400 and 14850 with 40 watts coupled to an inverted 'V' dipole from 1000 -1200 UTC every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. The exact frequency to be tested will be announced at the start of every hour.

UNIDENTIFIED

Detective time again for all those of you ready for a few puzzles of the audio variety. On April 26th at 0910 on 6205, possibly Radio RID.

On May 3rd on 6222 Dutch Music was heard at 1057 with the Ruurlo address, this one could be Radio Telstar.

On May 4th on 6206 at 1001 a one minute excerpt from the Radio Sovereign story, the same day a station on 6240 was heard playing tapes from the American station Y95 noted at 1018 to cut out at 1056.

On Saturday May 16th on 6243 at 1019 with a relay of the RTE Radio 2, maybe this one was Radio Mi Amigo.

Any suggestions on the above to the usual address.

Loggings: Podney R.3ixx, Text: Adrian Cooke



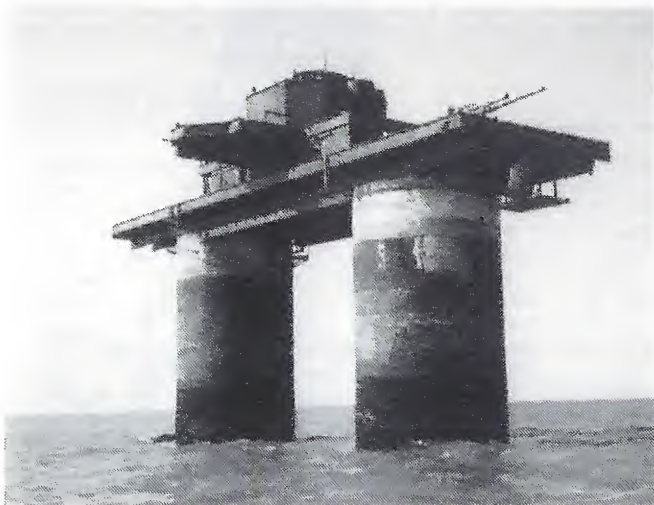
Driftback 20

At midnight on Monday 14th August 1967 the Marine, Etc., Broadcasting Offences Act became law, effectively bringing to a close the first generation of British offshore radio. Now, 20 years later, there are still thousands of offshore radio enthusiasts many of whom still remember those early days of offshore radio.

To celebrate this 20th anniversary, Britain's largest free radio organisation, The Caroline Movement, is organising this special event at London's Bloomsbury Crest Hotel on Saturday 15th August 1987. If you have any interest in offshore radio at all, whether it be from the past or present, then you simply MUST come along to this event!

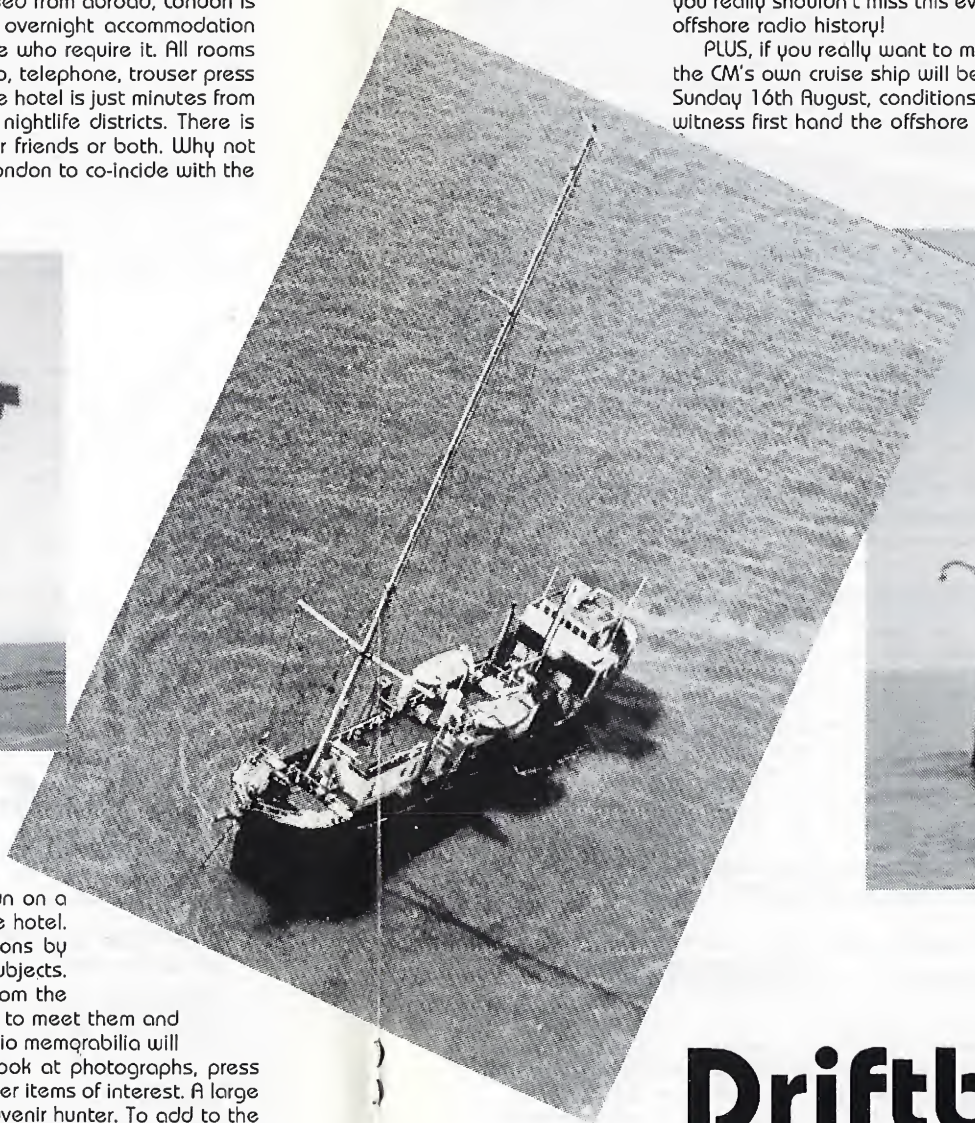
WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?

The venue is London's Bloomsbury Crest Hotel in Coram Street, WC1. This is close to King's Cross, St Pancras and Euston Main Line stations and to Russell Square tube station. There are also plenty of buses passing nearby. For those with their own transport, car parking is in an NCP car park next to the hotel. Your event programme will provide you with detailed maps and travel information to ensure you find the venue easily. For those coming from distant parts of the UK or indeed from abroad, London is an easy location to reach and we have arranged special overnight accommodation rates for delegates at the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel for those who require it. All rooms have private bathroom, colour TV with in-house movies, radio, telephone, trouser press and hospitality tray with tea and coffee making facilities. The hotel is just minutes from the British Museum and London's West End shopping and nightlife districts. There is plenty to see and do for the radio enthusiast and family or friends or both. Why not make a long weekend of it or even spend your holiday in London to co-incide with the event of the decade?



WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

A superb variety of offshore films and videos will be shown on a 100" video screen in the modern conference facilities of the hotel. In addition to these there will be audio visual presentations by offshore radio personalities on many fascinating subjects. Throughout the day there will be a host of personalities from the world of offshore radio attending. You will have the chance to meet them and hear about their experiences. A huge display of offshore radio memorabilia will be assembled so that you can wallow in nostalgia and look at photographs, press cuttings, books, posters, plans, diagrams and all sorts of other items of interest. A large selection of sales stands will cater for the collector and souvenir hunter. To add to the atmosphere, we shall be having a whole host of fun events during the day such as a star raffle and competitions. A buffet meal will be included as part of the price of the event together with hot drinks. To top all this each delegate will get a fully illustrated souvenir programme.



The chance to meet so many offshore radio enthusiasts and personalities under one roof is in itself rare, but to also celebrate such a special anniversary means that the 1987 Caroline Movement event will have a very special atmosphere indeed. If you have any interest in the wild and exciting history of the offshore radio stations and their personalities then you really shouldn't miss this event. Come along and yourself be a part of offshore radio history!

PLUS, if you really want to make a weekend of it, as an optional extra, the CM's own cruise ship will be operating a trip out to the North Sea on Sunday 16th August, conditions permitting. This will give you a chance to witness first hand the offshore sights of today and yesterday in style!



WAVELENGTH
P.O. BOX 5
HUNSTANTON
NORFOLK
PE36 5AU

Driftback 20



HOW TO BOOK

Places at **Driftback 20** must be booked in advance. To obtain your place at **Driftback 20** fill in the booking form below, then send it together with your remittance and a stamped addressed envelope to

Driftback 20, 23 Grove Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6JY.

NAME(S) of CM member(s)

CM Membership Number(s)

NAME(S) of CM non-member(s)

ADDRESS to which correspondence connected with this booking should be sent

Number of members
required at £25

☐

Number of non-members
required at £30

☐

I require accommodation at £33.00 per person per night (inclusive of full English breakfast) within the Bloomsbury Crest Hotel for persons for the nights of

My total remittance of £..... in the form of Cheque/PO (made payable to the Caroline Movement) is enclosed, together with an SAE.

Please send me details of the cost of facilities for sales and exhibition stands at the event

☐

(Tick if required)

Please send me details of the optional extra North Sea cruise to be arranged for Sunday 16 August

☐

LONDON

Andy Walker

Some funny things have been happening on FM in London over the past few weeks. LWR(London Wide Radio) haven't been on the air much due to technical problems, but on their frequency of 92.1 A live relay of Radio Caroline off 558 has been broadcast over the city with very bad audio. The reason for this is unclear, but I believe this is LWR trying to sort out their gremlins in the equipment. At one point they had the transmitter on, but it was receiving the link signal which had gone down, therefore putting out the hiss from the link frequency! Did you follow that?

Well its time to blow my own trumpet, in the last issue I told you about London Town FM- LTFM was due to come on the air with a mixture of oldies, rock and Top 40, and they have on 92.5 over the weekend, Saturday and Sunday. Broadcasting from the South-West, North Surrey part of London, the programming is slick and it makes a change to the soul stations, Shortwave and Medium wave are promised later.

TKO and LWR are still trying to maintain a 24 hour service of soul over the capital with SOLAR and KISS, The weekend big boys doing the same in Stereo. Also of a weekend smaller stations come up and put out Soul Music the likes of SKY FM 91.6 FM, DRL 92.7FM (DIRECT LINE RADIO) Quest 89.9 and many more with low power transmitters. Network 21 are on 89.6 FM every Friday and Saturday from 8pm'till 5am with a mixture of News, Information and music. They hope to resume the TV broadcasts later on in the year.

London once again has a rock station, RFM on 90.2 FM takes over from the late Alice's Restaurant as London's leading Rock music outlet. The signal in the south, where I am isn't very good, but in North London it is a lot better, maybe because that's where the transmitter is. Soul Radio isn't just big in London. I found out not so long ago about a Soul station which broadcasts from the Canterbury area in Kent in Stereo on 88.6 FM, every weekend, the name I believe is WKSQ. They cover a good part of Kent, and have reached as far as Dartford and Erith, the edge of South East London. Maybe I'm the first to write about this station, I've never heard of or seen anything about it in other Free Radio publications, So if you see Sid tell him!!!

I found out something very interesting about the raids in Mid May on the South London soul Superpirates. Rumour has it that the DTI were tipped off on Studio sites, transmitter sites and names of operators and DJs by someone who is on a BBC radio station. The story that is travelling on the grapevine in the pirate world here in London is that a DJ on a BBC Radio station was told by his management that his listenership had dropped, and that he had better "Pull his socks up or else!" As this DJ used to be on the soul pirates a few years ago, and as he apparently thought that it was the likes of TKO, LWR, KISS and SOLAR who were to blame for his drop in the ratings, rumour says, he decided to "Grass them up!" If the rumour is true, I would say that's not a very nice thing to do, especially as he used the soul stations to get up the ladder of success and to put him where he is today. Scumbags are few and far between. On that note I shall see you next time.

MERSEYSIDE

RADIO MERSEYWAVES are still operating regularly every Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday on 1242kHz. The station suffered a further raid on May 15th, during Davin Collins' Friday breakfast show, and he since has been missing from the line up, replaced by Mark Palmer and Kevin Jordan. The contact address is 9 Meadfoot Road, Moreton, Wirrel, Merseyside, L46 7Uw.

CHESTER COMMUNITY RADIO operates Sundays until recently on 103.5, however the IBA station 'Marcher Sound' has introduced a new FM channel on 103.4 So CCR has now moved to 104.2 The address is 66 Aldford Road, Chester.

RADIO JULIE, although they have had a few problems are still operating weekends on 104.8. The address is 112 Greenwood Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside, L49 8UM.

CONCEPT RADIO are currently off the air but a return is expected shortly, they normally operate on 104.3

After some tests under a variety of different names RADIO ATLANTIS are now on the air weekends on 93.6kHz, the station is operated by Free Radio 'Old Timers' Rick Lane and Steve Bishop. 150 Rake Lane, Wallasey, L45 1JW

RADIO VERONICA on 104.7 are still off the air despite an attempted come back on June 7th, the station does however intend to return. The address 81 Lark Lane, Liverpool 17.

COUNTRYWIDE

KENT

RADIO ATLANTIS will be off the air until mid July, having blown their transmitter up. The station normally transmits on 103.7 MHz with 150 watts on Wednesday evenings from 7pm to 9pm. The station was raided by the DTI in early May when the coax was taken by the DTI, this was confirmed as the authorities left a note pinned to a nearby tree.

MEDWAY TOWN SOUND is a planned community type station for the county, no on air date is yet known. (Steve Most)

ISLE OF WRIGHT.

CHANNEL RADIO could be heard broadcasting to the Solent Area on Easter Bank Holiday Monday during the morning on 1143kHz/263 metres Medium wave and also on 105 FM in stereo. The stereo signal was very good in most parts of the solent, DJs on the station were Bob Chesom, Baby Bob, Ian St. John, Mark Matthews, Nick McCay, Tiny Tim and Nick Phillips. On this broadcast the station gave out a lot of information on what was on at local cinemas on the Isle of Wright as well as the times of the ferries to and from the Island. The station left the air at 3.30pm GMT, yet still without giving out any mailing address or telephone number to contact them. (David Williams)

With thanks to Allen Dean, Neil Frazer and Tim Jackson.

Following the proposals for a set of Radio stations from the former Roughs Tower known as Sealand there now comes the possibility of a Television service. The proposal sees a possible 12 million homes being covered by the channel. 'Prince' Roy Bates says that a final decision over the companies interested in using Sealand as a broadcasting base will be made sometime over the next few weeks, 9 months after the possibility was first raised on the BBC Television 'Wogan' programme. Should the service go ahead then the erection of a 1000 ft high television mast will be necessary.

The 'East Anglian Daily Times' of June 8th mentions the US based Ewing Oil Inc as a possible contender. Ewing plan a fun service with no news transmissions including the transmission of current films and music videos with seven minutes of advertising per hour, almost on par with the IBA which allows six minutes on commercial television. The report also states that Prince Roy is rumoured to take 25 per cent of the station profits, although it is generally thought that the operation will be on a rent basis.

On air time is given as later this year, although readers will remember that early 1987 was previously given. The DTI for their part issued their familiar statement "The department is very strict on such matters because we fear the pirate stations cause problems with the signals to the emergency services."

John Cole, one of nine British subjects to be tried under the Marine Offences Act in connection with the 'Eurosiege' monitoring of the Offshore stations in the summer of 1985 has left the country, and as the Marine Offences Act is not subject to the extradition treaties there is nothing the authorities can do to get him home. The other eight defendants ordered to appear before Kent Magistrates are former captain Patrick Patternoster, Robb Eden, Nicholas and Linda Murray, Phillip Payne, Robbie Day and Roger Carr, in addition Michael Elliot is charged with publishing Wavelengths and programme details of Radio Caroline.

The court appearance has now been put back to July 10th.

London based publication Media Monitor is taking a short break from Publication through until the beginning of August. Media Monitor, which covers Short Wave Dlxing together with News of the London FM stations and Shortwave free Radio is planning a 'New Look' upon its return. In addition there will be a change of address, until that time the present address of 11 St. Phillip House, Lloyd Baker Street, London WC1X 9BA remains current.

June 4th 1987 will be noted as an important date for Free Radio, as it was when the House of Lords, the highest court in the United Kingdom ruled in favour of operator Jeffrey Rudd. In 1985 Rudd had pleaded guilty to charges under the 1949 Wireless Telegraphy Act, and in addition to his £140 costs and fine he also had £3,000 worth of equipment confiscated, this included tape decks, microphones, speakers, and most importantly his record collection. It was successfully argued that the actual records did not form part of the broadcasting equipment. After careful consideration their Lordships dismissed the appeal. A second point had been raised by the DTI that records were available for the station's use, this was cleared by their Lordships, as a record available for use would not necessarily be played.

Andy Walker

Caroline Rockshow Review, Tonbridge, June 11, 1987

Apart from Thursday June 11th 1987 being Election Day, and my Dad's birthday (Hi Dad!), I slipped on my 50ls, picked up my young lady who was dressed in denim and headed down the A21 to Tonbridge in Kent, to the Caroline Rock Show at the Royal Victoria Rooms. When we arrived we got a drink, and wacked into the main hall to be surrounded by Heavy Metal freaks and Rockers shaking the dandruff from their heads playing invisible guitars to the sounds of Motorhead, AC/DC, Cinderella and Black Sabbath. On stage, shaking it all about, Free Radio legend and WFRL broadcaster Iain Johnston, front man of the Caroline Rock Show doing his stuff live on stage. The hall wasn't as full as I thought it might be, but everyone was having a good time and that's what it is all about. The light show was very effective, simple but effective. Banks of lights flashing to the rock beat as the music screamed out of the speakers. Johnston and Co were jumping about, shaking the dandruff, and also Iain DID play an invisible guitar!

I stood at the back in the shadows watching the proceedings for 20 minutes Iain came off the stage, and as he passed me I said "I saw you freaking out up there" The reply I got "Andy you g-t" He then rushed into the loo, after which I got him a pint and we had a chat at the bar. The live band came on at around 1000, Parisian Blonde, a local bunch of lads, who were very good indeed, even though I was outside at the bar listening to the sound banging through the wall, and looking out the corner of my eye at a six foot tall blonde girl who fitted a pair of Iced washed jeans fantastically! Overall the night was a success, and I left at 1045 to make my way home, leaving Iain Johnston rocking the crowd, while I was to sit in front of the TV to watch the election results.

It was 20 years ago this summer, August 14th, 1967, that the Labour Government of the day outlawed the private offshore radio stations. After 3½ years the United Kingdom was once again under the state controlled broadcasting system, the BBC. All the stations closed, with the exception of the two Caroline ships which remained on the air. The BBC started its own Pop service, Radio One. I do not have to tell you anymore, the rest is history. Offshore stations came and went, Governments passed bills forcing them to close or the stations running into money problems and going bust. On land teenagers fed up with the sounds coming from their radios started broadcasting from fields with transmitters the size of biscuit tins, and programmes recorded on tape machines. These stations also came and went, some stayed around for a long time, coming back after raids and court appearances, but since the summer of '67, Twenty years on what's the state of radio in the UK today?

We have four BBC National stations, BBC local stations and IBA commercial stations in every city and town up and down the country doing the same thing as each other. Pirate stations broadcasting from the Tower blocks in major cities and 20 years on we still have an offshore radio station in the North Sea- Radio Caroline, Britain's largest commercial radio station with a listenership of 4½ million in the United Kingdom and a further 3 million on the continent, a real, Free, Alternative radio station, or is it? When Caroline returned in the 70s she was an alternative to the BBC and IBA, Album music, something the Public wanted, which they got for 8 years, until the Mi-Amigo gave up the fight with the sea, and sank in March 1980. She came back in August 1983, A Bigger ship, A 300 foot mast and the promise of real alternative radio for the listening public. She didn't start off too well, but what is she doing now? Forget about the past, the answer is that at the moment Caroline is doing very little indeed. The only thing Caroline is doing is playing non-stop music, OK, fine I like that, but what about the presenters? Are they fun and interesting to listen to? Are they heck! The impression I, and a lot of people I know get is that Caroline could be a lot better than she is. There are a lot of good DJs in this country of ours, some of which could make Caroline sound fresh and lively. So why do the people who hire the staff pick so many dull and boring voices? Are they told to? Does the management want Caroline to sound layed back? Unofficial comment suggests that Ronan O'Rahilly is not happy with the way that the DJs are sounding either. Another question is how the Caroline organisation could have picked such an awful cliché as "The best of the old and the best of the new", who could think up such a saying for Europe's biggest radio station, and as for one presenter saying "Caroline 558 is on every twenty minutes", anyone could be mistaken for thinking it was a loop tape!

I hope this opinion will make you think when listening to Caroline, I also hope you will write and let us know your views. The Free Radio Press "Slag Off" state radio, but always "Suck up" to the pirate stations. Free Radio is worth fighting for, so to make it better than it is we should criticise it. A final point. Why didn't I say anything about Laser Hot Hits? Enough said.

In Wavelength 17 a look at the Landbased stations.

Agree, Disagree?

Your comments on the above or any other radio related topic are welcome to Wavelength.

PoBox5,
Hunstanton,
Norfolk.
PE365AU.

Neil Frazer

One of the frequent claims made by Free Radio station operators and DJs is that they offer a choice from strict playlisted, chart format, full of hype ILR and BBC Stations. Radio as with Television can be tuned to a different channel if you are searching for something different, if you fail, the last resort is to hit the off switch. This should be the biggest plus factor in favour of pirate stations, yet very few exploit it. John England waffles on about freedom of choice, safe in his Texas home with a choice of several score radio stations all competing for an audience by use of different music formats. Certainly in Merseyside the similarity in music is boring to a point of suicide. In this, and the next issue I will be looking at format with a very slight bias and a large supply of Vodka and Aspirin.

Top of the list must be Radio Merseywaves, a recent comment in the local press stated that Merseywaves was voted the Number one Medium wave free radio station in the UK by a leading free radio paper. Yes there was a vote, and it was unanimous! However ten out of ten for persistence, the station staff fight to get back on after a raid or any other mishap; and to maintain a schedule. A good signal with good sound levels, but the music format lacks imagination. As Merseywaves is staffed mainly by club DJs the music reflects the club influence with a large output of Disco/Dance music, not that it affects the station audience very much. Night outs organised at local clubs are the station's method of finance and are always a sellout. High spots of the station's output are the legendary Bert Williams Show on Sundays. Bert specialises in 60s/70s music and it is very listenable radio. Thankfully he no longer uses that dreadful echo mike. Inbetween tracks Bert makes comments about most subjects under the sun. Classic programmes from him have been "The Baby that could have been run over by the Lorry in the Car Park", "Atomic Powered Radio", "Einstein's theory of relativity" and "Space Travel". I do however disagree with his comments about the DTI. The other DJs are in general competent and don't fall around too much. If it were possible to vary the music Merseywaves could double their audience.

Next on the list of medium wave stations should be Central Radio, recently closed down but a return is promised later this year. Central stood out because of their Golden Oldie format, largely influenced by Phil Davies. Worthy of note is that a good percentage of 60s music on the station is not the overplayed ILR/BBC hit records that we always hear. A lot of this music format carries over to Phil Davies' own station, the long running Liverpool Pirate Radio, recently raided, but again we are promised a return soon. As a Sunday only station LPR managed to cram a good mix of music into its limited hours. Having spoken to many LPR listeners I get the feeling that although it transmits to a smaller area than Merseywaves, they have a higher audience per 1000 than Merseywaves, mainly due to the different styles of music featured.

Finally we come to the return of a Rick Lane station, Radio Atlantis. For the first few weeks of its return the station changed names with each DJ change. Music 976, Jackie North etc. If the ubiquitous John Wyer was available I'm sure that the station name would change again to MAR.

Free Radio veteran Rick's deep knowledge of music in general and rock in particular blend very well with Steve Bishop's sused BBC voice. Between them they put out a highly listenable programme. Not much talk spoils the tracks, I suspect due to much of the music being on tape and the DJ does not know what is coming next. Still the back announcements are perfect especially with some of the long rock tracks featured. Both DJs manage to put out music by well known artists that very rarely gets any airplay on BBC/ILR stations although the inclusion of Underground/Independent label music may leave a listener shocked for a few seconds. Still that's what Free Radio is all about. Top marks to Rick and Steve for returning with a format that breaks the Lance/Disco mould.

Merseywaves may be Number One but for how much longer? Will the heavy metal gang crush the Dance/Disco fans? Only time and the DTI can tell.

If the authorities were to be taken at their word all Free Radio stations use frequencies without care or regard to other operators, especially the important emergency services. From experience however we know that this is not the case that is why the 'Admiralty List of Radio Signals Volume One' is of special interest to Short wave stations. It shows how the portion of the 48 metre band regarded as the 'Free Radio band' is used by many maritime stations through Europe.

Of prime concern is the station at Portishead, however stations between 6200-6225 and 6250-6280 should seriously consider a change of frequency, a great part of the band used for the Sunday morning Short Wave stations, including Radio Delmare (Belgium), BRI (United Kingdom), Radio Pamela (United Kingdom) Radio East Coast Commercial (United Kingdom), and Westside Radio (Ireland). The problem is further heightened by crossband working with the station listening on 62..MHz and transmitting on 64..MHz

6200-6215.5 consists of 6 channels spaced 3.1kHz apart, duplexed with coastal stations 6506-6521. 6218 and 6221 are coast/ship simplex and 6256-6280 are CW channels (Morse) spaced 500Hz apart. Marine CW starts again on 6326 upwards.

Therefore when listening to a station which is 'interrupted' by morse signals, it is technically the 'Free' Radio station which is causing the interference. That said there is the possibility of low power stations working between some of the frequencies used by the Nordic countries. Below we have noted the main frequencies to watch, this list however is by no means exhaustive, and we stress the need to watch all channels before use.

| COUNTRY, STATION and CHANNEL | POWER:kw |
|--|----------|
| Great Britain:Portishead | |
| 6257, 6262, 6267, 6268, 6402, 6495, 6500, 6505 | 5-15 |
| Wick. | |
| 6333.5 | 0.3 |
| Belgium:Oostende | |
| 6272.4-6274.8, 6328.25 | 5.0 |
| 6218.6, 6221.6 | 1.0 |
| Netherlands:Scheveningen | |
| 6272.4-6273.6, 6274.8-6276, 6404 | 3.0 |
| 6258.5(Telex), 6496.5(Telex) | 10 |
| 6268.5(Telex), 6404(Telex) | 3.0 |
| Federal Republic of Germany:Norddeich | |
| 6272.4-6273.6, 6279.6-6280.2 | 5.0 |
| 6200 | 10 |
| 6258, 6259.5, 6262.5, 6267.5, 6496, 6497.5, 6500.5, 6505.5 | 10 |
| Denmark:Lyngby | |
| 6206.2, 6212.4, 6215.5, 6512.6, 6518.8, 6521.9 | 10 |
| 6260.5, 6263.5, 6498.5, 6501.5 | 5 |
| Sweden:Göteborg | |
| 6269.5(Telex), 6460 | 5 |
| Norway:Rogaland. | |
| 6206.2, 6212.4, 6512.6, 6518.8 | 5 |
| Portugal: Lisboa | |
| 6203.1, 6509.5 | 5 |

Research: Steve West, Text: Adrian Cooke.

So far, halfway through their trek around the free radio wonderland, our heroes have been amazed by masts, staggered by studios, and generally knocked out by what they've seen so far. Until now, things have gone smoothly, which is pretty amazing in itself- but will it be their last day in Ireland? Read on . . .

Tuesday September 30th:- Problem: how do you return two anoraks to the UK across some 600 miles of assorted water and land without ruining the holiday of the other two who happen to be sharing the same car? This was the problem which faced us midway through our trip when two of the crew had to return home (See Wavelength 15). The solution, and a simple one at that: put them on the train! So, at 7am I dropped John Dean and Luis Nieto at the local station. For them a days travelling back to Larne, the ferry over, and a bus/train back to where they'd left the car. For Jack Russell and myself, another five days of anoraking. Returning to the B&B, the landlady seemed relieved that we hadn't gone without paying (seeing us all rush out the door must have been a bit worrying), but how we could disappear in a hurry now that Jack Russell had filled our room with enough equipment for a medium sized monitoring station I don't know. Of course the recording had gone on all night and by now our collection of tapes was looking quite impressive.

Heading south, and still half asleep, we left Dublin for our first call of the day at Bray local Broadcasting. We were hoping to get a look at two (or was it three?) Rock mountain, but early morning mist and low cloud put pay to that; still, there will be another time. . . We arrived in Bray Mid morning in brilliant sunshine and soon found BLB located in a basement near the station. No more gleaming megastations, but this looked quite nice: a basic production studio with decks and eight channel mixer, a sales/station office and the main on-air studio with decks, and same as many other stations we had seen and would see during our visit, but of course there was a slight difference, it was all perfectly legal (?). The staff were very helpful, answering most if not all of our questions. One thing we noticed in the studio was an aerial rotator control: this apparently drove the 6 element aerial on the roof that was both FM outlet and link to the MW site a mile away. Due to high winds etc, the aerial sometimes moved and had to be rotated back into line, or perhaps it was due to changing sites. Anyway we didn't have a lot of time to spare and there was still the rest of the country to see.

Leaving Bray and down to Wicklow for the next station on our list WLCB. On arrival at the studios the station seemed to be trying out some experiment in slant-polarising its FM aerials-two folded dipoles- whose supporting pole had a 60 degree bend in it halfway down! Walking into the station it seemed strangely empty, with only the duty DJ. Shortly after our arriving the owner turned up and we heard all about the trials and tribulations of running a radio station. The aerial pole, we were told, had been blown down during some recent gales, but things seemed to be working out OK though the TX got a bit warm. Amongst the questions we asked him was how the stations managed to get away with erecting the 150 foot masts used for MW. The answer was simple he said: When WLCB had put up their mast the local council had muttered something about planning permission (I think one of the members listened to RTE) it was finally agreed because the 180ft structure was held up by guywires it could be classed as a temporary structure. If only it could happen here!

Another 20 miles brought us to Arklow, home of Arklow Community Radio. This station seemed to be having some sort of problem with its tx since there didn't seem to be more than 20% modulation on the signal. We eventually tracked ACR down to a first floor studio over a TV shop on the main street, and discovered a DJ who couldn't have been older than 13! He

appeared to be in full control but didn't know any details of the tx, etc, directing us to the shop below, which was closed. We returned after lunch to find the owner had returned and soon got chatting about the station. The low modulation was due to the mod transformer having been blown and the temporary replacement not being quite powerful enough. Like many of the 'country' stations ACR ran a mixture of live and taped programmes.

Bypassing Wexford (I don't think that there was a station operating there) we got to our final call for the day at ABC Radio, Waterford, about 6pm. As it so happened the duty DJ was a familiar face from a station I had been involved with about five years ago and I just happened to have an early recording of him in the tape recorder. JR was persuaded to walk into the studio and play the tape in question which surprised him no end (Eamonn Andrews eat your heart out). Most of the staff were going around the corner to a nearby bar for the evening and we joined them for an evenings quiet boozing and radio chitchat. During the evening we also had the latest news on the football match between Waterford and Bordeaux in France: ABC would phone up the local station in Bordeaux to get the latest scores and match-play and in one case they were giving out the correct score while RTE, who were also covering the match, managed to credit the French with a couple of extra goals. That night we both slept at the station: JR in the production studio and me in the newsroom.

Wednesday October 1st:- Out to the shops for breakfast and then a visit to the MW tx site to sort out a problem: sometime during the early morning the MW tx had gone off and the station was unable to switch it on by the usual method. This consisted of sending various tones via the FM outlet at the studio, which were picked up at the tx site and relayed on another FM frequency. The tones were decoded and used to switch the tx on or off at high or low power. Looking around the engineers workroom we were shown the homemade AM optimod and an interesting box of tricks almost completed that would make ABC the first AM stereo station in Europe. The optimod had been built by writing to the manufacturers and asking for details on the system. They had sent back the full manual and specification so instead of buying the system they had built one themselves. The AM stereo system had come the same way. They also had an AM stereo receiver (and were hoping to import a number of them for prizes and sale) and we were amazed by how the rx could take your typical MW grotty AM signal and, by various processing, turn it in to FM Mono quality. (NB Must get one myself)

To the tx site then, and to get at the tx we had to climb over a six foot pile of carpets. Pushing various buttons didn't seem to do anything and the 1kW MW rig remained off. The FM outlet appeared to be working OK so we started looking at the MW aerial. This consisted of a quarter-wave longwire up the mast (Built of scaffold poles and fencing wire) from a tuning coil and capacitor housed within a crate beside the mast. There lay the problem. From the looks of it a dog or small animal had got inside the box and got a jolt from the RF, causing it to jump out again, pulling off the aerial connection from the coil. This consisted of a croc clip which was clipped to the coil and engineer Andy explained that they had disconnected the capacitor because it made no difference to the perfect match they had on the aerial. Lid back on the box and back to the tx. Push the button and all is well.

Returning to Waterford and a quick call over to Waterford Local Radio (WLR) Of the two stations in Waterford, ABC is the older and more established while WLR caters more for the younger age range. WLR also win on their studios: VERY NICE, but listening to them both on the radio there is very little difference between them.

Back on the road then and on to Dungarvan, home of Dungarvan Community Radio. This was one of the few stations which we did not get in to see but we tracked it down all the same to a bungalow on the west of town. Mid after

-noon and we dropped in on Community Radio Youghal, located over a pub on the village's main street. Here we found the oldest DJ of the trip - he must have been around 70- playing a selection of 1940s records. It wasn't an easy job because the hifi decks being used would sometimes autochange and he would then have to do some pretty quick talking while re-cueing the record. We were made very welcome with tea and bikkies and could have stayed chatting for the rest of the day, but time was getting on and we had to get to Cork.

Outside of Dublin, Cork is the only other big centre of radio activity with four stations on the air when we arrived. The first stop was at WBEW at Cork city, after something to eat of course, and we drove past the studios three times before we realised that they had now moved across the road from their original studio site. Inside, everything appeared to be half built, although the production and main studios were working, and we spent half an hour looking around and generally talking to the staff. . . There were two other stations on the air from the city but we didn't have any addresses for these and neither gave out addresses or 'phone numbers while we listened so we went to the other big station in the area ERI just north of the city. This looked more like a building site and apart from an O.B. Caravan with the station logo on it there was nothing to show that there was a radio station in the place. JR went to investigate and found the studios in what looked like some farm buildings nearby. The person on duty refused to let us in: The last time they had let someone in he had been a private detective from the local residents (who objected to the station's 200ft mast in their select area) and had closed them down. No they linked to their tx site about five miles away.

Two refusals out of thirty stations wasn't bad, but by now it was starting to get dark so we headed southwest to Bandon, home of West Cork Local Radio (WKLR). We got to the studios to find everything in darkness. From listening to the link we reckoned that they were running taped programmes, so having grabbed some pictures of the aerials and the O.B. Caravan outside we headed back towards Cork and stopped the night at a B&B place in Kinsale. Why there? Well it involves some girls I met last year on the South Coast. . . but I'm not likely to tell you about that am I?

In WAVELENGTH 17: Live from Kilkenny, roughing it and panic stations: will our intrepid heroes get back in time? Will they get back at all? Read the final thrilling installment in our next issue.



Left:
Radio Rainbow's
Short Wave Transmitter